

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled).

1 2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein step (b) comprises
2 (b1) receiving a plurality of item category selections from the customer, each
3 item category representing an area of potential interest to the customer;
4 (b2) displaying information identifying a plurality of sample preference items
5 representing subclasses in each category; and
6 (b3) selecting sample preference items based on information received from the
7 customer.

1 3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein step (b3) comprises
2 receiving a rating from the customer for each displayed sample preference item
3 and selecting sample preference items based on the received rating.

1 4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the consumer
2 preference test is conducted before a live audience.

1 5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the consumer
2 preference test is conducted individually respondent by respondent with a
3 plurality of respondents and each respondent rates each of a plurality of
4 preference items.

6. (Canceled).

- 1 7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the distances are scaled
2 to fall within a predetermined range.
- 1 8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein step (d) comprises
2 displaying the recommended items to the customer under control of the
3 processor.
- 1 9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein step (b) comprises
2 generating information identifying a plurality of profile sample items based on
3 selections made by a customer and on information identifying items
4 recommended in step (d).
- 1 10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein step(b) further
2 comprises generating information identifying a plurality of profile sample items by
3 displaying information identifying items recommended in step (d) to a customer,
4 receiving a rating from the customer for each displayed item and using the
5 received ratings to generate the information identifying a plurality of profile
6 sample items.
- 1 11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the preference items are
2 songs.
- 1 12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the preference items are
2 movies.
- 1 13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the preference items are
2 television shows.
- 1 14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the preference items are
2 books.

1 15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the preference items are
2 fashions.

16. (Canceled).

1 17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 35 wherein the profile generator
2 comprises:

3 a category generator that receives a plurality of item category selections
4 from the customer, each item category representing an area of potential interest
5 to the customer;

6 a sample profile item generator that displays information identifying a
7 plurality of sample preference items representing subclasses in each category;
8 and

9 an item thresholding unit that selects sample preference items based on
10 information received from the customer.

1 18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the sample item profile generator
2 comprises an input mechanism for receiving a rating from the customer for each
3 displayed sample preference item and the item thresholding unit selects sample
4 preference items based on the received ratings.

1 19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 35 wherein the consumer
2 preference test is conducted before a live audience.

1 20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 35 wherein the consumer
2 preference test is conducted individually respondent by respondent with a
3 plurality of respondents and each respondent rates each of a plurality of
4 preference items.

21. (Canceled).

1 22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the distances are
2 scaled to fall within a predetermined range.

1 23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the presentation unit
2 comprises a display that displays the recommended items to the customer.

1 24. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the profile generator
2 generates information identifying a plurality of profile sample items based on
3 selections made by a customer and on information identifying recommended
4 items calculated by the recommendation unit.

1 25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the profile generator
2 comprises a display that displays recommendations generated by the
3 recommendation unit to a customer, an input mechanism that receives a rating
4 from the customer for each displayed item and the item thresholding unit selects
5 sample preference items using the received ratings.

1 26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the preference items
2 are songs.

1 27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the preference items
2 are movies.

1 28. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the preference items
2 are television shows.

1 29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the preference items
2 are books.

1 30. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~36~~ 35 wherein the preference items
2 are fashions.

31.-32. (Canceled).

33. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 36 wherein the
consumer preference test is conducted with a plurality of respondents and each
respondent rates each of a plurality of preference items.

1 34. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for use in a computer
2 having a processor and a memory for generating recommendations for consumer
3 preference items, comprising:

- 4 (a) creating and maintaining a database in the memory that stores information
5 identifying a plurality of preference items and distances between each pair
6 of items, wherein each distance in the database is calculated by first
7 calculating the difference in preference ratings obtained from a respondent
8 in consumer preference test for that pair of preference items and
9 combining calculated preference rating differences for all respondents in
10 the consumer preference test;
- 11 (b) generating information identifying a plurality of profile sample items in the
12 database based on selections made by a customer;
- 13 (c) controlling the processor to scan the database and to ~~select~~ form a
14 collection of consumer preference items including each consumer
15 preference item wherein the stored distance between each profile sample
16 item and ~~a selected~~ that consumer preference item is less than or equal to
17 a predetermined fixed distance; and
- 18 (d) presenting the ~~selected~~ collection of consumer preference items to the
19 customer as a recommendation.

1 35. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for generating recommendations for consumer
2 preference items, comprising:
3 a recommendation database ~~in the memory~~ management system having a
4 database that stores information identifying a plurality of preference items and
5 distances between each pair of items, wherein each distance in the database is
6 calculated by first calculating the difference in preference ratings obtained from a
7 respondent in consumer preference test for that pair of preference items and
8 combining calculated preference rating differences for all respondents in the
9 consumer preference test;
10 a profile generator that generates information identifying a plurality of
11 profile sample items based on selections made by a customer;
12 a recommendation unit that scans the database and ~~selects~~ forms a
13 collection of consumer preference items including each consumer preference
14 item wherein the stored distance between each profile sample item and a
15 ~~selected~~ that consumer preference item is less than or equal to a predetermined
16 fixed distance; and
17 a presentation unit that presents the ~~selected~~ collection of consumer
18 preference items to the customer as a recommendation.

1 36. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for generating
2 recommendations for consumer preference items, the computer program product
3 comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code
4 thereon, including:
5 program code for creating and maintaining a database in the memory that
6 stores information identifying a plurality of preference items and distances
7 between each pair of items, wherein each distance in the database is calculated
8 by first calculating the difference in preference ratings obtained from a
9 respondent in consumer preference test for that pair of preference items and
10 combining calculated preference rating differences for all respondents in the
11 consumer preference test;

12 program code for generating information identifying a plurality of profile
13 sample items in the database based on selections made by a customer;
14 program code for controlling the processor to scan the database and to
15 ~~select~~ form a collection of consumer preference items including each consumer
16 preference item wherein the stored distance between each profile sample item
17 and ~~a selected~~ that consumer preference item is less than or equal to a
18 predetermined fixed distance; and
19 program code for presenting the ~~selected~~ collection of consumer
20 preference items to the customer as a recommendation.

1 37. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising:

2 (e) changing the information identifying a plurality of profile sample items
3 generated in step (b) based on the collection of selected consumer
4 preference items presented to the customer in step (d) and repeating
5 steps (c) and (d) to refine the recommendation.

1 38. (New) The apparatus of claim 35 further comprising means for changing the
2 information identifying a plurality of profile sample items generated by the profile
3 generator based on the collection of selected consumer preference items
4 presented to the customer by the presentation unit and controlling the
5 recommendation unit and the presentation unit to generate and present new
6 recommendations to the customer using the changed information.

1 39. (New) The computer program product of claim 36 further comprising program
2 code for changing the information identifying a plurality of profile sample items
3 generated by the program code for generating information based on the
4 collection of selected consumer preference items presented to the customer by
5 the program code for presenting and controlling the program code for scanning
6 the database and the program code for presenting the collection of selected
7 items to the customer to select new preference items from the database and
8 present the new selected items to the customer as refined recommendations.